

1 **RESOLUTION OPPOSING HOUSE BILLS 170, 171, AND 172 REGARDING**
2 **FULTON COUNTY TAXATION; RESTRUCTURING AND REDISTRICTING OF**
3 **THE FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS; AND RIGHTS OF**
4 **FULTON COUNTY EMPLOYEES**
5

6 **WHEREAS**, it has long been customary in this state for local elected officials
7 (boards of commissioners and city councils/mayors) – who are more attuned to the
8 desires and needs of the local constituents on county or city matters – to be consulted
9 by members of the General Assembly prior to introduction of any proposed local acts
10 affecting that particular local jurisdiction; and

11 **WHEREAS**, in the case of redistricting, it is also customary for those local
12 legislative bodies to develop redistricting plans for their respective jurisdictions, with
13 those plans then presented by local Representatives and Senators for consideration
14 and adoption by the General Assembly; and

15 **WHEREAS**, in keeping with the above process, in 2011 the Fulton County Board
16 of Commissioners retained an independent redistricting consultant, who developed a
17 proposed Fulton County redistricting plan that fully complied with federal and state law,
18 including the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution and the federal
19 Voting Rights Act; and

20 **WHEREAS**, following approval of that redistricting plan, the Fulton County Board
21 of Commissioners presented that plan to Fulton County members of the 2012 General
22 Assembly for consideration and action by the General Assembly; and

23 **WHEREAS**, contrary to the experience of other counties and cities, the 2012
24 General Assembly took no action on Fulton County's independently created redistricting
25 plan; and

1 **WHEREAS**, in the current 2013 session of the General Assembly, certain state
2 representatives from the northern part of Fulton County have introduced in the General
3 Assembly a redistricting plan (House Bill 171) that is radically different from Fulton
4 County's proposed 2012 redistricting plan; and

5 **WHEREAS**, those state representatives did not seek input from, or even present
6 a copy of the plan to, the Fulton County Board of Commissioners prior to introducing the
7 redistricting plan contained in House Bill 171; and

8 **WHEREAS**, it appears that, if adopted, House Bill 171 would substantially reduce
9 the ability of minorities to elect candidates of their choice to the Fulton County Board of
10 Commissioners, in violation of federal law; and

11 **WHEREAS**, state representatives from the northern part of Fulton County have
12 also introduced legislation (House Bill 170) that would limit Fulton County's taxing
13 powers while simultaneously increasing homestead exemptions from countywide taxes
14 to \$60,000, a level that appears to be vastly higher than in any other jurisdiction in the
15 state; and

16 **WHEREAS**, those state representatives have also introduced legislation (House
17 Bill 172) that would strip Fulton County employees of civil-service protections that
18 currently ensure employees are not terminated for political or non-job-related reasons;
19 and

20 **WHEREAS**, those state representatives did not seek input from, or even provide
21 copies to, the Fulton County Board of Commissioners prior to introducing House Bills
22 170 and 172;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fulton County Board of Commissioners hereby states its opposition to House Bills 170, 171, and 172 and expresses its concern regarding the negative effects those House Bills would have on 1) the ability of Fulton County government to continue to provide essential services to its citizens; 2) the voting rights of Fulton County citizens; and 3) the right of Fulton County employees to be free from arbitrary treatment and disciplinary actions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk to the Commission is directed to forward copies of this Resolution to the members of the Atlanta/Fulton County Delegations to the Georgia House of Representatives and Georgia Senate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect upon its adoption, and all resolutions and parts of resolutions in conflict with this Resolution are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

SO PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Commissioners of Fulton County,
Georgia this _____ day of February, 2013.

SPONSORED BY:

William "Bill" Edwards, Commissioner
District 7

Emma I. Darnell, Vice-Chair
District 5

John H. Eaves, Chairman
District 1, At-Large

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Robert L. "Robb" Pitts, Commissioner
District 2, At-Large

Joan P. Garner, Commissioner
District 6

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Mark Massey, Clerk to the Commission

Larry W. Ramsey, Jr., Interim County Attorney

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